

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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R 241239Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3795

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2387

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, UR

SUBJECT: PONOMAREV VISIT TO SYRIA

1. DELEGATION OF CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE HEADED BY BORIS PONOMAREV, CANDIDATE MEMBER OF POLITBURO AND SECRETARY OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE, AND INCLUDING VLADIMIR VINOGRADOV ARRIVED DAMASCUS JUNE 20 FOR FOUR-DAY VISIT. PONOMAREV GREETED BY BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS BUREAU YASAR ASKARI, REGIONAL COMMAND MEMBER AND ASSISTANT SECYGEN OF BAATH PARTY ABDULLAH AL-AHMAR, OTHER BAATH PARTY LUMINARIES AND EASTERN BLOCK DIPLOMATS.

2. JUNE 21 PONOMAREV AND ASKARI DISCUSSED BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. JUNE 22 DELEGATION VISITED KUNEITRA WHERE PONOMAREV DENOUNCED DESTRUCTION OF CITY AND DECLARED THAT SOVIET UNION STANDS FOR "LIBERATION OF OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AND GUARANTEEING OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN ARAB PEOPLE." FOLLOWING KUNEITRA TOUR COOPERATION AGREEMENT FOR 1975-76 BETWEEN BAATH PARTY AND CPSU
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SIGNED BY PONOMAREV AND AL-AHMAR. FOLLOWING SIGNING

CEREMONY PONOMAREV, SOVIET AMBASSADOR MOUKHITDINOV, AND ASKARI MET WITH PRESIDENT ASAD FOR THREE HOURS DURING WHICH LETTER WAS DELIVERED TO ASAD FROM GENSECY BREZHNEV. DISCUSSIONS REPORTEDLY CENTERED ON BILATERAL RELATIONS AS WELL AS MIDDLE EAST AND INTERNATIONAL SITUATION.

4. JUNE 24 DAMASCUS PRESS REPORTED THAT PONOMAREV MET WITH PLO DELEGATION HEADED BY YASIR ARAFAT. EXCOMM MEMBER ABU MAYZAR LATER STATED THAT VIEWS WERE EXCHANGED IN ATMOSPHERE OF "MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING." SOVIET DELEGATION EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR PLO IN ITS CAPACITY AS LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, ACCORDING TO ABU MAYZAR.

5. VISIT OVERLAPPED WITH THAT OF ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS AND ALSO CAME WHEN FONMIN KHADDAM WAS AWAY IN U.S. AND PRIMIN AYOUBI IN EGYPT FOR FIRST MEETING OF BILATERAL POLITICAL AND MILITARY COORDINATION COMMITTEE. EXCEPT FOR DELEGATION'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ASAD, IT RECEIVED VERY LIGHT PRESS COVERAGE AND WAS TREATED ENTIRELY AS PARTY-TO-PARTY EXCHANGE. PELLETTREAU

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